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University of Montana

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MEDIA RELEASE

November 25, 1986

FINNISH WEAVER OF UM TAPESTRY
TO VISIT DEC.1

MISSOULA --

A special luncheon and a lecture on "Textile Arts in Finland" will be highlights of a visit to Missoula next week by the Finnish woman who wove most of University of Montana's 33' X 20' rya tapestry, "Montana Horses." It will be the first time the artist, Anneli Hartikainen, has seen her work in place.

Hartikainen, chief weaver for the Friends of Finnish Handicraft in Helsinki, and Eeva Pinomaa, former director of the group, are flying to the United States this week, arriving in Missoula on Saturday. Their stay in Missoula is sponsored by UM's School of Fine Arts.

"It was always our intention that the weavers should be able to see the finished piece in place," said Brian Spellman, administrative officer of the School of Fine Arts. "It's even more special for Anneli, who has never been outside of Finland before and never ridden on a plane before."

The women will be honored at a luncheon at noon Monday, Dec. 1, at Joseph's Coat, 131 W. Main. The general public is invited.

People interested in learning more about the rya tapestry and textile arts in Finland are invited to the lecture and slide program that evening. Pinomaa will lecture on "Textile Arts in

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Finland" at 7:30 p.m. in the Masquer Theatre at the UM Performing Arts and Radio-TV Center.

The Friends of Finnish Handicraft are known for weaving rya rugs in rich, glowing colors. "Montana Horses" represents the largest of its kind ever woven.

The tapestry was designed by Rudy Autio, UM art professor emeritus and fills the entire stairwell of the Performing Arts/Radio-Television Center. It was erected in February, 1986.

Hartikainen, who has woven more than 400 rya rugs in the past 24 years, spent a year and a half weaving "Montana Horses." Piecing seven panels together precisely into the unusual triangular shape required skills beyond the intricate weaving of the rug, says Spellman.

The colorful tapestry depicting three horses is 100 percent wool and weighs 440 pounds. The rug's design is based on a print by Autio, designed in 1984 while he was artist-in-residence at the Arabia porcelain factory in Helsinki, Finland. A special edition of 150 prints are available for a \$300 tax-deductible contribution to the School of Fine Arts Production Endowment Campaign.

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